

T H E C A S E O F

Richard Taylor, Esq; a Member of the Honourable, the House of Commons, and John Clerkson, Esq; the two surviving Trustees of Hannah Knight, an Infant, Daughter of John Knight, Esq; lately Deceased, by Mary his Wife.

21th. and 22th. of
May, 1683.

BY Indentures of Lease and Release, Sir *Ralph Knight* late of *Langoll* in the County of *Tork*, Knight, in Consideration of a Marriage then intended to be had between *John Knight*, his Eldest Son, and *Mary* the Daughter of *Robert Clerkson*, Esq; did convey the Mannor of *Letwell* in the County of *Tork*, with divers Lands, and Hereditaments in the County of *Nottingham*, to the said *John Clerkson*, *Richard Taylor*, *Robert Nott*, and *Nicholas Fownes* (which said *Fownes* and *Nott* are since dead) for the Term of 500 Years to com-
mence from the several Deaths of the said Sir *Ralph Knight*, and *John Knight*, in trust for the raising of Portions for Younger Children of the said intended Marriage, viz.) if there was but one Daughter (and no issue Male) then to raise 5000 *l.* Portion for such Daughter, payable at her Age of One and Twenty, or day of Marriage, which should first hap-
pen, and such Maintenance, as the Trustees, or the Survivor of them should think fit, not exceeding 60 *l. per Ann.*

The Marriage soon after took Effect.

21th. of December,
1686.

The said *John Knight*, and *Mary* his Wife had Issue a Daughter (being the above-named *Hannah* the Infant) who was Baptized on the first Day of *January* following.

6th. of May, 1693.

The said *John Knight* died, leaving Issue only the said Daughter, and after his Death, the said Trustees (*John Clerkson* and *Richard Taylor*) agreed with the Council of *Mary* the Mother (the Infant being then but a little above six Years old) to allow 40 *l. per Annum* for her Maintenance, which Maintenance was by them paid to the Mother for two Years, and before the third Year was up, viz. 2d. of *January*, 1695, the said *Mary* the Mother of the Infant inter-married with *James Watkinson*, a mean Fellow, (who was her own Coachman, and had been her late Husband's Groom.)

2d. of Jan. 1695.

Trinity Term, 1696.

The said Trustees being very much concerned for the Infant (as being not only Trustees, but related to the Child, having married two of the Sisters of the Infant's Father) did prefer their Bill in Chancery against the said *Watkinson* and his Wife, thereby setting forth the said Trust and the Marriage of the Mother, to the intent to have the Infant preserved from being made a Prey of by her Father-in-Law, and that she might not be married to her disadvantage.

3d. of August, 1696.

Watkinson and his Wife put in their Answer to the said Bill, (which was perused and signed by *Thomas Gooding*, Serjeant at Law) whereupon the said Serjeant *Gooding* finding that there was such a Portion settled on the Infant (though otherways a stranger to the Family) he treated with *Watkinson* and his Wife to marry the said Infant to *Thomas Gooding* his younger Son, who was then above three and Twenty Years old, and the Infant under Ten (as by the Answer of *Watkinson* and his Wife, and perused by the Serjeant, appears) and accordingly in the long Vacation, and before the Court of Chancery could make any order concerning the Child.

29th. of September,
1696.

Thomas Gooding the Younger (in order to get the Licence at Doctors Commons) maketh Oath, that the said *Hannah Knight* the Infant, was about 12 Years old, and thereupon the said Infant was soon after taken into the House of the said Serjeant *Gooding*, and he now pretends that she is married to his said Son.

Hilary Term last.

The said Trustees did petition the Lord Keeper concerning the said Infant, complaining of the Proceedings of the said *Watkinson* and his Wife, and the said Serjeant *Gooding* (pending the said Bill in Chancery) and prayed that the said Infant might be brought into Court, and committed to some indifferent Hand, untill she should attain her Age of Consent; whereupon the Lord Keeper ordered, that *Watkinson*, and his Wife, and Serjeant *Gooding* should attend him with the Infant on the next Day of Petitions.

12th. of February,
1696.

12th. of Mar. 1696.

The said Parties attended with the said Infant, and after the Petition and two Affidavits on the Petitioners part were read, Serjeant *Gooding* refused to consent to deliver up the Child at that time, but desired further time, in order to take Copies of the Petitioner's Affidavits, and to make his defence by Affidavits also; and thereupon the Lord Keeper ordered that the Child should be brought again, and all Parties to attend him on the 18th of *March* then next ensuing, and that all Affidavits on either side should be filed two days before.

18th. of Mar. 1696.

The Petitioners with their Council attended at the Lord Keeper's House accordingly, but after some time Mrs. *Watkinson* with some of Serjeant *Gooding*'s Daughters and Family, came with the Infant to my Lord Keeper's House, but before the Infant was brought into Court, she was taken away from the Company of her Mother and the Serjeant's Daughters and others of his Family that came with her, by a Woman who stood there ready, whose name, upon Inquiry, is *Passmore*, the Wife of one *Passmore* a Cook, who lodgeth in the *Strand* (which *Passmore* was for four Years a Servant in Serjeant *Gooding*'s House) and is employed to make Mantoes for several of the Serjeant's Family, and had been but two days before at the Serjeant's House.

My Lord Keeper sent his Messenger to search after this Woman (Mrs. *Passmore*) at her Lodgings, but she could not be found, nor the Child; and then the Lord Keeper did Examine most of the Serjeant's Family, but both he as well as they, and also *Watkinson* and his Wife, and *Thomas Gooding* the Younger, do all pretend that they do not know where the Child is, nor will they produce her.

It is supposed, that it is the Design of the Serjeant and his Son, and the other Confederates, either to keep the Child till she comes to the Years of Consent, and then to compell her to agree to the Marriage; or otherwise, that if the Child die before she attain her Age of Twelve, that *Thomas Gooding* the Son will then be Intitled to take out Administration to the Infant, (under the Colour of this Mock-marriage) and thereby recover the 5000 *l.*